THE FORSAKEN FARMHOUSE.

Against the wooded hills it stands,
  Ghost of a dead home, staring through
Its broken lights on wasted lands
  Where old-time harvests grew.

Unplowed, unsown, by scythe unshorn,
  The poor forsaken farm.fields lie,
Once rich and rife with golden corn
  And pale green breadths of rye.

Of heathful herb and flower bereft,
  The garden plot no housewife keeps;
Through weeds and tangle only left
  The snake, its tenant' creeps.

A lilac spray, once blossom clad,
  Sways bare before the empty rooms;
Beside the roofless porch a sad,
  Pathetic red rose blooms.

His track, in mould and dust of drought,
  On floor and hearth the squirrel leaves,
And in thy fireless chimney's mouth
  His web the spider weaves.

The leaning barn about to fall
  Resounds no more on husking eves;
No cattle low in yard or stall,
  No tresher beats his sheaves.

So sad, so drear! It seems almost
  Some haunting presence makes its sign;
That down yon shadowy lane some ghost
  Might drive his spectral kine!

—*John G. Whittier.*

IRISH POTATOES.

The following from the Petersburg (Va.) *Rural Messenger* is quite as applicable to North Carolina as to Virginia:

"Very few crops the farmer of the State grows, yields more food per acre than the Irish potato. It may be that the sweet potato sometimes exceeds it in yield, but then the latter costs twice or three times the trouble and labor that are usually bestowed on the white, or Irish potato. Taking the amount of manure and labor required to grow a crop of this potato, nothing upon the farm yields so large a return as does the Irish potato. It is the poor man's bread crop, yielding more food at less cost than any other known product of the Virginia field or garden.

And yet the Irish potato is not largely cultivated here. Nearly every farmer, it is true, has a patch of them for summer eating, but it is rare indeed that we find this food upon the tables of our farmers in winter. Many farmers indeed buy their seed potatoes every spring, not having enough left over from summer to plant the next crop, let alone having any to eat during the winter.

This may seem an astonishing statement to some, but it is true. That this potato is palatable and nutritious, that it can be cooked in many different forms, that it is liked by almost every person, that it is, like bread, always in season, that it is easy to grow and easy to keep, amounts to nothing. Farmers do not grow enough for their own home use.

This is a mistake that our people are making. They should grow this crop largely for home use. It saves bread. It should be upon the table in some form as food all the days. It is good for the milch cows, the pigs, the chickens.

Stable manure is not excelled by anything as a fertilizer for this crop Hog-pen manure is excellent also; cow-pen manure not good. Phosphate, with woods' scrapings, makes fine Irish potatoes—200 pounds per acre, and enough litter to fill the trenches full.

RAISING CALVES WITHOUT A MOTHER.

The editor of the *Southern Agriculturist*, who witnessed the method by which an Alabama farmer raises his calves without the assistance of the mother, describes it as follows:

"As soon as the calf was dropped it was taken out of the sight of the cow by two men and rubbed perfectly dry, the mother not having a chance to caress it once. Fresh milk was taken from the cow and a man inserted his hand in the milk placing one finger in the little calf's mouth and it began sucking, and in three days the calf would drink the fresh milk from a bucket. The cow has never been restless, nor has the calf blated after its mother. The little fellow drinks two quarts of milk per day and is as happy as a sunflower. The above is the correct way to raise a calf without a mother; never let them become acquainted with each other, and there will be no trouble.

SOME FEEDING FACTS.

Experiments on the Missouri Agricultural College Farm have given facts for the following estimate of the value per hundred weight of certain grains and fodders, based on chemical composition and digestibility, with corn at 70 cents per hundred weight as the standard of comparison:

GRAINS.

Corn	$ .70
Oats	.63
Wheat	.89
Shorts	.66
Bran	.67
Linseed cake	1.27

FODDERS.

Timoth hay	$ .35
Red clover	.43
Alfalfa	.40
Hungarian	.32
Sorghum	.35
Corn fodder	.25
Oat straw	.27
Wheat Straw	.18
Corn cobs	.28

Value of 100 pounds corn when fed under variable conditions as to shelter, manner of feeding, and kind of stock fed. These figures are mostly a summary of the results of feeding experiments made at the farm of the Kansas State Agricultural College:

Fed to pigs without shelter (pork 3½ cwt.)	$ .65
Fed to pigs well sheltered—very cold weather	.61
Fed to pigs without shelter—very cold weather	.31
Fed to pigs in warm pens (pork 3½ cwt.)	.71
Fed to pigs (scrubs)	.57
Fed to pigs (pure breds)	.73
Fed to pigs in thin flesh	.81
Fed to fat pigs	.35
Fed to steers corn meal (beef 5 cwt.)	.68
Fed to steers ground corn and cob (beef 5 cwt.)	.86

—*So. Cul. and Dixie Farmer.*

MUCK AS A FERTILIZER.

Mr. Lorrin Burnes, of Goshen, writes to the *New England Farmer* that for fifteen years he has been a close observer in the use of meadow muck and the different modes of its application to the soil.

On all soils of newly cleared land or those receiving the wash of high lands, and land of a swampy character, or that which is rich in vegetable matter, the application of clear muck will have no visible benefit. But use the muck as an absorbent in barn-yards, pig-stys, for slops and suds, and you have an article that will make any land laugh and grow fat. The greatest benefits, however, are seen from its use on sandy soils, or soils that have been worn by long use in tillage or grass growing, without returning an equivalent in the shape of manure of some kind.

Four years ago, other parties and myself purchased a peat and muck swamp and commenced ditching. We have since been using the muck taken from the ditches in composting and in various ways to test its value as a fertilizing agent. The first year one used it thrown under the cattle in stables and in his pig-stys to the amount of one-half muck and one-half manure, doubling the amount of manure. The result of all crops raised on land manured with the same was a better show through the season than the same crops on the same soil, with clear stable manure.

In fact, on one field of corn, a part of which was planted with the muck compost, and a part with an equal quantity of clear barn manure in each hill, a difference in favor of the muck could be seen as far off as you could see the field while growing, and on harvesting the corn, that on the muck made much the most show.

Encourage by all means your sons and daughters to engage in the keeping of bees. You are working and laying up for your children, but give them a chance to work and lay up for themselves. Farmers' wives and daughters can engage in this work just as well as, or better, than their husbands and brothers. Ladies are better fitted in several respects for bee-keepers than men. In the first place, bees are usually kept near the dwelling, and the wife or daughter can have a better oversight, and be better able to attend to their wants, than the husband or son, whose business takes them to distant parts of the farm. In the next place, ladies are neater and not so apt to be in a profuse perspiration as men, or to have the odor of domestic animals about them.—*Southern Cultivator and Dixie Farmer.*

Farm Notes.

GRINDING FEED.

Except for sheep, which masticate and digest more thoroughly than other animals, grain for any kind of farm stock should be ground. This is especially important for cows. Though these re-masticate their food, much grain fed whole will pass through them giving little benefit. When ground, meal may be mixed with cut straw or other coarse feed that would not be eaten, and it will digest better in this more bulky form than if fed separately.

CANNED FRUITS.

Although it is a good plan to put sugar in canned fruit at the time of sealing, it is not necessary to keep it from spoiling. The essential thing is to exclude the air. Where this is not done the fruit will turn sour, and the additional sugar will only make the vinous fermentation more active and thorough. The cans should be examined frequently, but without being much handled. Any that show loose covers or any mould on the top should be used before spoiling further.

DEPTH OF PLOWING.

The common practice of plowing at the same depth every year is apt to make a hard pan by packing the soil below where the share scrapes over it. If this depth is varied occasionaly the hard pan will be broken up, and this alone is good reason for deeper plowing than usual sometimes. This extra depth of furrow, however, should be made when the subsoil is dry. To plow deep in Spring, when the soil packs from being filled with water, only makes the evil worse. In fact, heavy soils should not be plowed at all when water-soaked, as this often results in permanent injury.

HENS IN HORSE BARNS.

It is very difficult to keep fowls out of horse barns, and they do so well in these quarters that many farmers are tempted to let them stay there, on account of the increased egg production of hens allowed to scratch in the manure pile. But the injury to the horses more than offsets this advantage, as where hens go vermin will surely follow, and keep a team poor despite the best feeding. But if some loads of horse manure are drawn to the henyard and grain sprinkled through it the fowls will get all the advantages of the exercise and without injury to the horses.

SHEEP HUSBANDRY.

We have endeavored to advise the farmers of this section to hold a portion at least of their flocks, while in other sections the number of sheep was being reduced. There is no doubt there will be a gradual rise in sheep and their products for some years to come. Hence farmers in this section should increase rather than diminish their flocks. A great mistake is made by some flock-masters in under-feeding. Mr. Libby, of Burnham, Me., writes that no man can afford to winter a flock of sheep without feeding grain every day they are out of the barn. Farmers who feed no grain and carelessly tend their sheep make a mistake in dollars and cents. The poor feeder has many disagreeable things to contend with. His sheep are covered with ticks, which healthy, fat sheep seldom have. Many deaths attributed to worms in the head or ticks are really caused by starvation. Corn and good hay will frequently cure these troubles. The farmer who feeds his flock of sheep one pint of corn or oats every day, can make them eat up rough fodder to advantage. His sheep shear heavy fleeces and raise all their lambs. Higher prices may be seen in the future for wool, fat lambs and muttons.

CANADA THISTLES.

A New York farmer describes his method of destroying Canada thistles. He once sowed a Spring crop, which was about destroyed by thistles. Early in September he plowed the field, cut narrow and very deep furrows and made sure the roots were all cut off, preparatory for the wheat crop. He believes in plowing them under as a green manure crop. He also Summer-fallowed a field, the land being full of thistles. He plowed around the whole field, but left about an acre in the centre not plowed. This plowing was done in June. He did not plow deep nor close, as he wished to get all the second growth for a green crop to plow under. About September 1st he plowed the whole field. Where the thistles were left standing in June, dead-ripe stalks and seed all were plowed under or dropped off. He plowed through the whole, and used a chain to drag the thistles under; then sowed to wheat, and got a fine crop. Should the season be wet after plowing, new thistle sprouts will appear, but not from the old stalk. They start from roots thrown up in plowing. In such cases the farmer should plow a second time in the Fall, as these sprouts are small and tender and easily distinguished in dry weather. Another farmer remarks that he has never failed by plowing to increase Canada thistles, but by mowing when they were in blossom in two or three seasons they can be destroyed.

CHEAP POULTRY HOUSES.

Beginners in keeping poultry usually start out with exaggerated ideas of the profit to be derived from this business. As the buildings for housing fowls are among the first items of expense, they are apt to be constructed on far too large and costly a scale. The inside work should be painted, or better still sheathed with tarred building paper, in order to make it offensive to vermin. With two or three windows to afford light and ventilation a small poultry house can be constructed for fifteen or twenty dollars, according as the poultry keeper is handy with tools and able to do much of the work himself. Then if after one or two years more room is desired, build another house on the same cheap pattern, and far enough away so that the fowls in each can be enclosed in separate yards. When these henhouses become old it will be more and more difficult to keep them free from vermin. A cheap house will pay its cost in a very few years, and it may sometimes be advisable to pull down and build anew, which course with expensive houses could not be afforded. The poultry house should never be constructed in a barn, especially one where other farm-stock is kept. The vermin, which it is almost impossible to clean out of an old house, becomes an intolerable nuisance on horses, cattle or even swine.

PREMIUM BUTTER.

Daniel H. Hale, of Rowley, Mass., who took the first premium for dairy butter at the Essex County Fair last Fall, gives the following statement: The butter was made from the milk of grade Jerseys. The milk is strained in shallow pans, in a cool room, to stand until the animal heat escapes. It is then removed to the milk-room and allowed to stand from thirty-six to forty-two hours. It is then skimmed and the cream put in the cream jars, care being taken to thoroughly stir it with each new addition of cream. When slightly acid it is churned until the butter reaches the granular state; then the buttermilk is drawn off, and a pailful of weak brine put in the churn and churned for a few minutes. This is then drawn off and another pailful of brine put in and churned as before. When sufficiently washed, the butter is taken from the churn before drawing off the brine, as the small, cheesy particles which sometimes adhere to the butter are better removed than by first drawing off the brine. The butter is then worked over and salted, three-fourths of an ounce of salt to the pound, much care being taken to remove all the buttermilk. It is then put in large earthen pans and placed in a cool cellar until the next morning, when it is again worked over, weighed and made into prints, and again placed in the cellar until the next day, when it is ready for market. As far as possible, the milk and cream are kept at about 60° through the whole operation.

A Missouri farmer claims to have cured his hogs of cholera by the use of a prescription furnished him by his family physician. He boiled the roots of mayapple, pokeberry and mullein in water, for several hours, until he made a strong decoction. He gave a pint of this tea in bran slop, three times a day for a week. All his hogs recovered but one that could not be induced to eat the mixture.—*Southern Cultivator and Dixie Farmer.*

—A hog dressing 1,155 pounds was killed at Stockport, N. Y., recently.

AN ORCHARD FERTILIZER.

The best fertilizer I have used for fruit trees is made of chip dirt from the wood pile and old ashes. I mix in the proportion of one bushel of ashes to three bushels of the chip dirt, stirring well with the shovel. About two bushels of this mixture is to be spread around each tree giving large, well-grown trees more. The manure is applied at any season. Do not pile any litter or rubbish around the trees that would harbor mice. In summer keep the weeds from around the trees. Experience has taught me that this fertilizer serves a very valuable purpose, not only in supplying the trees with suitable food but in mellowing the soil, and helping on such crops as I may choose to plant in my orchard. It is an excellent fertilizer for any crop, annual or perennial, and the ashes, from hard wood, supply the trees with the elements they most need, and the soil lacks, namely, potash.

It is a pleasure to see how a young orchard will thrive after an application of this fertilizer. Sometimes I burn logs to get ashes for this purpose, and if I have no chip dirt, I go to a dead oak or hickory, and scrape together the fallen bits of bark and the rich dirt around the tree. It is a very good substitute for chip dirt. It is obvious that this material is an excellent manure rich in the elements of food of trees I believe in keeping the fruit trees well fed, and that a large space around each tree should be given exclusively to the tree from which it is to draw its supplies.

USEFUL SUGGESTIONS.

We clip the following useful suggestions from the Petersburg (Va.) *Rural Messenger:*

Ground bone is an excellent thing to keep by the hens, also ground oyster shell.

Whitewash the stables, cellars and poultry houses, and oil the roosts with kerosene.

"Scaly leg" on fowls may be cured by a few applications of kerosene; a little sulphur added will improve it.

Fowls need a liberal supply of water and, although they will live without it, yet they thrive and fatten the best when pure water is given them.

Early chickens pay the best; prices are very much higher earlier in the season than in the fall, and even if the pullets are to be kept for layers, early ones are the best.

Don't throw those horseshoes aside because the heel calks are worn off and the shoe is too short to turn over again. Have the smith weld toe calks on sidewise. These will wear longer.

Give all the stock salt with sulphur mixed in it at this season. Also scatter dry sulphur about in the beds where the stock lie. Give sulphur to hens in meal; give them marl also.

Clean and repair the harness, paint the carts and wagons, oil with kerosene the plows and harrows to prevent the timber from cracking in the hot sun, and apply oil to the rusty hoes and other implements to be used during the summer.

Prepare poles and sticks for beans, such as Lima and running snaps, and the marrowfat garden peas. The poles should be six or six and a half feet long; the sticks for peas, four feet long. Both should have a rough surface, to enable the plant to cling better.

Scrape off the old bark from the apple and pear trees, and wash the bodies and larger limbs with whitewash, or soft soap, sulphur and strong ashes. It destroys the moths, kills insects, prevents the bark from getting dead and hidebound, and makes the trees assume a young and thrifty look.

Burn the old hog beds to destroy vermin, make new beds on the old site—if there were none sick—and drop soft soap about, that the pigs may get it on them when they sleep. It cures mange, yellow sweats, and scurffy skin, and rids them of vermin.

—The total sales of wool in Boston since Jan 1, 1886, have been 20,438,653 pounds, against 25,415,376 pounds for the same time last year. This is a decrease of 4,976,723 lbs.